

## ABSTRACT

### ELIMINATION OF PREMATURE BLOCKING IN COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS

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In a communications network, a virtual channel connection is established between first and second nodes in a communications network using a negotiating procedure to determine a mutually acceptable path identifier. The first node sends a connection request to the second node incorporating a path identifier for a virtual channel to be used for the connection. The second node determines whether the path identifier is acceptable for establishing the connection, and if so returns an acceptance message. If the path identifier is not acceptable to the second node, this node returns a negotiation request message incorporating a new path identifier for an alternative virtual channel to be used for the connection.